ABSTRACT

An access is requested by a local host to a public network. A public address to be used for the access to the public network is determined. A local address, corresponding to the local host, is mapped to the public address. The public address is returned to the local host. A determination is made as to whether an outbound access is to a local network or a public network. When the outbound access is to a public network, then an access is requested to the public network. Public information in response to the request is received. The public information is placed in a payload portion of one or more packets created for the outbound access. The public information generally comprises at least a public port, but may also comprise a public address. The request may supply a local port, so that a public port in the public information will generally conform to the local port.